



WARM-UP D

LEARNING FROM STORIES

This exercise uses fiction designed for young children as a basis for lessons about ecology and environmental responsibility. It can be used independently or in conjunction other classroom activities. It is related to the "The Rain Forest Is Alive" activity.

CRITICAL OBJECTIVES

-  Recognize the relationship of plants, animals, and humans in the world
-  Explore and observe their environment
-  Recognize humans' influence on the environment, as individuals and as a group

SKILLS

-  Listening
-  Observing
-  Questioning
-  Comparing ideas

BACKGROUND

Storytelling is a time-honored teaching tool used in many cultures. The storybooks listed below all have environmental themes. They can serve as a starting point for conversations that call on children to synthesize information and experiences and think creatively about themselves and the world around them.

WHAT TO DO



1. Choose a book from the following reading list:
 - Keepers of the Earth* by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac
 - Chadwick Forever* by Pricilla Cummings
 - The Violators* by Gunnard Landers
 - The Great Kapok Tree* by Lynne Cherry
 - The Talking Earth* by Jean Craighea George
 - Mushroom Center Disaster* by N.M. Bodecker
 - Alvin Fernald, Superweasel* by Clifford B. Hicks
 - Canyon Winter* by Walt Morey
 - Poison Factory* by John Branfield
 - Baney's Lake* by Nan Hayden Agle
 - Beaver Valley* by Walter Dumau Edmonds
 - Who Really Killed Cock Robin?* by Jean Craighea George
 - The Lorax* (picture book) by Dr. Seuss



RELATED ACTIVITY

2

TARGET GRADE LEVEL

K - 5th (with modification for grades 6 and higher)

DURATION

one or more class periods, depending on the choice of books

MATERIALS

One of the books from the reading list shown

If I Built A Village (picture book) by Kazue Mizumura
All Upon A Stone (picture book) by Jean Craighea George
The Salamander Room (picture book) by Anne Mazer
Once There Was A Tree (picture book) by N. Natali Romanov
Tree House Town (picture book) by Miska Miles

Depending on your students' reading level, you may choose to read the story aloud to the class or have children take turns reading.

2. Follow up the story by leading children in a conversation about it. Ask questions that challenge their thinking. For example, explore why things happened or people acted in given ways, what changed during the story, how something in the story is alike (or different) from something the child knows or believes. Challenge students to find ways they can use the lesson in the story. For example, what can they do to help save the rain forests, or take care of animals, or help their parents conserve energy?
3. Whenever possible, create activities to follow up on the lessons taught by the stories to enhance the experience. Use your imagination. If the story is about industrial pollution, take students for a walk and have them point out smokestacks and other things that might be visible examples.

SUGGESTED MODIFICATIONS

-  For students in grades 6 and above, you may wish to assign book reports based on fiction involving environmental themes. Have students present book reports to the class and discuss the environmental messages gleaned from the stories. Following is a list of books you may want to consider for this purpose:



TAKE NOTE! These books should be reviewed to verify their appropriateness for your class. Your school or local librarian can help you choose other environment-related titles suited to your class.

Emerald River of Compassion by Rowena Pattee Kryder
A Most Unusual Lunch by Robert Bender
Dear Children of the Earth by Schim Schimmel
Necessary Risks: A Novel by Janet Keller
Winter in the Heart by David Poyer
California Blue by David Klass
In Cahoots: A Novel of Southern California by Malcolm Cook
McCampbell's War by Robert Herring
Oh, What a Paradise It Seems by John Cheever
Heyduke Lives: A Novel by Edward Abbey

The Monkey Wrench Gang by Edward Abbey
The Profeteers: A Novel by Max Apple
The Forest Prime Evil by Alan Russell
The Killing Winds: A Novel by Clare Francis
A View from the Air: Charles Lindbergh's Earth and Sky by Reeve
Lindbergh
Covered Bridge by Brian Doyle
Bushmaster Fall by Carl A. Posey



